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hear the crack of the gun wielded by the wanton hands of thoughtless boys and ignorant men, which announces to our ears the painful fact that another of our most useful friends has been murdered. It is none the less murder, because it is called "sport." It is to be hoped that the efforts of our naturalists will eventually be successful in rendering apparent to our law makers the necessity for more stringent protective laws with provisions for the sure and speedy punishment of the avicide.

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THE RUNNERS OF ERYTHRONIUM AMERICANUM.

BY EDWARD POTTS.

THE botanist or amateur flower collector who wanders at this season of the year (early in May) along the woodland stream or loamy hillside, can hardly fail to observe numerous colorless stems, forming, as it were, little loops three or four inches in length, on or near the ground, both ends being buried beneath the surface. If his curiosity should lead to a closer examination, he will find that while one end is firmly rooted, the *other* yields readily to his effort to withdraw it, and proves to be, not a root, as he may have at first supposed, but a stem, smooth and of uniform diameter, excepting at the end, where it enlarges into an oval knob, which, later in the season, is further developed as a true bulb, and ultimately planted by the growth force of this slender stem at the depth of three or four inches in the loose wood-mould. If he should trace the same stem backward, carefully loosening the earth to avoid breaking it, he would find that it had its origin with two or three others, in the lower extremity of a similar bulb, pear-shaped, somewhat flattened, perhaps one-half an inch long by one-quarter in thickness, to the upper end of which may still cling a single withered leaf. Should he visit the same locality a few weeks later, he will find that leaf and stems have both disappeared and that the little bulb he saw in the process of being planted by such a deft and delicate finger has thrown out a radiating group of roots from *near* the lower end and, showing no other signs of growth, has evidently settled itself to await the developments of another Springtime.

A whole year is a long time for our botanist to wait the solution of his problem as to genus and species; so we will anticipate the result of his observations next year. The April sun will hardly have begun to warm the south fronting hillsides, ere our

sleeping bulb will waken and reach up into the moist spring air a single glossy leaf, spotted or blotched all over with spaces of darker shade, which he will then recognize, or any child could tell him, is the sterile condition of his misnamed though favorite Dog Tooth Violet (*Erythronium Americanum*).

Soon after the leaf has fully developed, spreading forth its rich juices to the influence of sun and air, three or four stolons or runners, such as already described, will protrude at the lower extremity of the bulb, and, promptly turning upwards, will be seen bursting through the surface of the ground, reaching up an inch or two into the air and then in a wavering, uncertain way burying themselves again in the earth to plant the bulb that shall repeat the same process next year.

As is well known, in its single leaf condition this plant never blooms. In this *second* year of its existence, therefore, the bulb cannot have fulfilled its whole mission; if, and we admit it to be an assumption not proven, the law of nature would give to every individual at least the *chance* to reproduce itself by means of perfected seed. By the *third* year, then, we presume the bulb will have attained the strength necessary to enable it to send up two leaves and a flower stalk and become what it should have been called, a lily indeed, with its pendulous golden bell.

In the lily family, propagation by means of lateral or axillary bulbs (as a compensation, perhaps, for the frequent failure to perfect their seeds) is familiar to every one; but I cannot find that these partially aerial runners of the *Erythronium*, by which it projects its bulbs sometimes to the distance of a foot from the parent plant, have been previously noticed. It may be well to add that these observations refer especially to one locality in what is known as Sweet Briar Glen, Fairmount Park, Philadelphia; that the mode of propagation described, is the universal habit of the plant, the writer is not prepared to assert.

—:O:—

THE MODE OF EXTRICATION OF THE AMERICAN SILK-WORM MOTH.

BY D. C. MCLAREN.

SHORTLY after reading Dr. Packard's article in the June number of the "NATURALIST," it was the writer's good fortune to observe the entire process of extrication in the case of a large and fine male specimen of *Telea Polyphemus*.